



ENGINEER SCHOOL/FORT TOTTEN – QUEENS, NY FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Description

The Department of Defense (DoD) acquired Fort Totten, a 146.75 acre property located in Queens, New York, between 1857 and 1943, for the coastal defense of Long Island Sound and the eastern entrance to the East River. Fort Totten also served as a post-Civil War hospital, an engineering school, and a training site for West Point Cadets. The Department of the Army conveyed 9.6 acres of the property to the U.S. Coast Guard, while still retaining ownership of the remaining 137.5 acres. The Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) is limited to the excess portion (9.6 acres) of Fort Totten, presently owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and is located in Congressional District NY-05.

Authorization

The Fort Totten FUDS is being investigated under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program for Formerly Used Defense Sites. The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 authorized that program.

Previous Investigations

LITTLE BAY RECORD OF DECISION / BIOTA SAMPLING:

Upland area studies are separate from previous work involving water, sediment and aquatic life in Little Bay, which was completed as required under the FUDS program. These investigations found no significant concentrations of mercury in Little Bay's ecosystem. USACE issued a No Further Action Record of Decision (ROD) in 2003 calling for follow-up sampling three years after the ROD to confirm the previous results. The confirmatory Little Bay biota sampling effort was conducted in September 2006 to fulfill the requirements of the ROD. This effort included finfish and shellfish tissue sampling, comparing concentrations of mercury found in these samples with those from the earlier samples, and confirming that levels remain comparable to previous results. Mercury levels in 2006 Little Bay biota sampling effort have been confirmed to be comparable to those of 2003 sampling effort. No further action was deemed warranted in Little Bay.

REMEDIAL INVESTIGATIONS

The upland portion of the Ft. Totten FUDS has been the subject of several previous investigations, dating back to 1986. USACE initiated a Remedial Investigation (RI) in 1997 to determine the nature and extent of the contamination reported in earlier studies.

Further investigations were conducted in summer 2004 to address data gaps and questions raised by state regulators regarding the upland areas and indoor air at Building 615. Some elevated levels of metals and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) were detected in the upland portion of the FUDS. Groundwater may not be appropriate for use as a potable water source. The sample results for the indoor air at Building 615 indicated that there were no elevated concentrations of mercury. No further investigation of the indoor air is warranted.

A background soil study was conducted in September 2008; the results of the background study will help distinguish DoD-related site activities from regional activities

SUPPLEMENTAL REMEDIAL INVESTIGATIONS (SRI):

In order to complete the upland remedial investigation, additional soils and groundwater sampling and analysis were conducted in May 2011. This supplemental work was conducted in five distinct areas of the 9.6 acre FUDS, as follows: Area 1-Fill Area; Area 2-Bldg. 624; Area 3-Bldgs. 610, 611 and 612; Area 4-Bldg. 625 and Area 5-Bldg. 615.

Status (As of January 31, 2012)

- Prepare Supplemental Remedial Investigation Report [June 2012]
- Prepare a Feasibility Study to evaluate potential alternatives [September 2012]
- Issue a Proposed Plan selecting any necessary remedial action(s) [December 2012]

Project Cost

Estimated Federal Cost [Remedial Investigations/Plans] \$4,300,000

Contact

Gregory J. Goepfert, New York District Project Manager
917-790-8235

Gregory.J.Goepfert@usace.army.mil